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Author: Eugenia Smyrnova-Trybulska

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Editorial

“Commission Staff Working Document. Annex II. Results of the public consultation on the EU’s modernisation agenda for higher education” presents “the key findings of the public consultation on the future of the EU’s agenda for the modernisation of higher education systems. The results of the consultation underpin the specific initiatives related to higher education presented in the Skills Agenda and will inform the EU’s future strategy for the modernisation of higher education. [...] A second area where skills gaps are highlighted in the consultation responses encompasses the broad fields of Science Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM), where many national authorities and stakeholders see a need to strengthen high-level skills provision. In particular, several contributions note a specific need for more ICT specialists and for students across the board to acquire better digital skills” (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&langId=en&moreDocuments=yes>, accessed 15 November 2016).

The present volume includes nine papers gathered in four chapters. Chapter I – “High-tech Electronic Learning Environment Design” – includes one article. In “E-learning Managers Training to Design High-tech Electronic Learning Environment,” written by Nataliia Morze and Oksana Buinytska from Ukraine, the researchers stress that education today must adequately reflect the needs of the society and be available throughout life, as well as provide an equal access for all people at all levels. The real step in solving these problems is to create an information and educational e-environment, which includes open learning and open access to educational resources. To ensure the quality of the educational information environment, we still need the organisation and management of the educational process, the proper development of IT infrastructure, a learning management system, and educational content. Therefore, there is a need for training that could resolve these tasks. This will help upgrade the educational process to a modern level using the information and educational e-environment available 24×7×365.

Chapter II, “ICT Literacy Development,” includes three papers. The first one, “The Research on Visual Literacy in Transliteracy as the Main Ability to Understand and Communicate in the 21st Century,” written by Małgorzata Wieczorek-Tomaszewska from Poland, describes the cultural and technological context of visual literacy, having its roots in the evolutionary expansion of the culture of im-

age and the development of the information society, in the context of the concept of transliteracy. It presents the results of pilot studies that examined specific visual skills of Polish university students.

The second paper entitled “Teachers’ Competencies and Their Impact on the Evaluation of Teaching,” by Hanne-Lore Bobáková and Janusz Karpeta from the Czech Republic, describes the research on teachers’ competencies with regard to two forms of learning: a full-time form of study and blended learning. The research aims at documenting the difference in the evaluation of partial competencies in full-time traditional education and in blended learning. This paper deals with the research on the competence assessment of the English teachers at the School of Business Administration in Karvina who teach students enrolled in both forms of classes. The introduction outlines the influence of political, social, and economic changes affecting education in the 21st century on competencies. Education is presented in a deeper context, in particular with regard to the meritocratic aspect. The paper also provides the list of the most important outcomes of the analysis of the conceptual nature of key competencies and its terminology scope. The aim of the research is the analysis of the data about teachers’ competencies, which shows how competencies affect the assessment of the quality of teaching foreign languages. The following competencies were examined: readiness of teachers to teach, clarity of the interpretation, erudition, communicability and suitability for transmitting information, and flexibility of the individual approach to students and their inspiration.

The third paper entitled “Technological and Ethical Challenges of Translators Training in Ukraine and Issues of Modern ICT Development,” prepared by Ukrainian researchers Mykola O. Nakaznyi and Olha Yu. Nesterova, explores the challenges of the Ukrainian system of translators training caused by modern technology advancement. The paper applies established ideas in practical approaches to the improvement of translators training system with respect to new technological requirements for the professionals. The relevant data were obtained by the analysis of questionnaire results. The problems of education of translators in Ukraine under the conditions of dramatic social and political changes are considered. The lack of training in the sphere of technology application for professional development is pointed out on the basis of the research results analysis. The research has also shown the contradictions between the needed level of technological skills of the students of the translation department and modern professional standards. The changes of certification standards for translators in terms of information literacy skills, ethics, and management as related to technological advancement are shown. The article discusses the results of the original survey involving high school graduates, students, and faculty staff. The recommendations proposed are based on the critical study of the peculiarities of the system of translators training in Ukraine.

Chapter III – “Methodological Aspects of E-learning” – contains two papers. The first paper entitled “Coherence Model of Instruction,” written by Pavel Ka-

poun from the Czech Republic, deals with three main issues: the understanding of curriculum in context, the ability of contextualisation, and retention of knowledge in the long-term memory. The paper first presents some principles based on the coherence model of instruction, which aims to achieve coherence of knowledge of isolated facts through a network of semantic relationships. Then, the theoretical basis of the model is described, including spatial learning strategies, cooperative learning, and excursions in an authentic environment supported by mobile devices. The author designed a methodology of teaching according to the principles of the coherence model, and he developed a virtual guide through educational exhibitions. The virtual guide was tested with students of a primary school during an experimental lecture in the Ostrava Zoo. The evaluation of the coherence model and the virtual guide was carried out using three methods: observation of students' behaviour and learning during the experimental lecture, pedagogical experiment, and questionnaires. The results of the evaluation prove that the coherence model of instruction has a positive impact on understanding in context, the ability of contextualisation, and retention of the curriculum in the long-term memory.

The second paper in the chapter – “Words Mean. Words Look. Words Sell (Themselves)” by Małgorzata Bortliczek from Poland – focuses on three issues: dominance of the use of English loanwords over attempts to create their Polish equivalents (as a result, a product, a process, an event, or an artefact promoted by an English-speaking culture is adopted together with its name), a trend whereby words (and titles composed of words) become images (through the choice of font, non-standard use of lowercase and uppercase letters, inclusion of non-letter characters, e.g. parentheses), and ascribing to words present in micro-acts a promotional function, advertising the entire product – a text. The trends discussed in the article are not new, but it is their intensity level that is new.

In addition, in the last chapter, entitled “Reports,” the reader can find reports from the following three conferences: *Theoretical and Practical Aspects of Distance Learning*, organised by University of Silesia in Katowice, the Faculty of Ethnology and Sciences of Education, held on 09–11 October 2016; *ICEduTech 2016* – the international scientific conference, held on 6–8 December 2016 at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), organised by the International Association for Development of the Information Society (a non-profit association) and RMIT; and the International Scientific-practical Conference *E-environment in the Open Pedagogical Education*, held at Herzen State Pedagogical University in Sankt Petersburg, Russia, in December 2016.

To conclude, it needs to be stressed that in “EUROPE2020 – a European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth” (<http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/COMPLET%20EN%20BARROSO%20%20%20007%20-%20Europe%2020%20-%20EN%20version.pdf>, accessed 10 November 2016), it is emphasised that smart growth means getting better results in the fields of:

- education (to encourage teaching, study, and qualifications),

- research / innovation (to create new products and services that would boost economic growth and employment, and would help solve social problems), and
- digital society (to use information and communication technologies).

The papers presented in this volume show results of different studies conducted by researchers from different countries. The findings are certainly useful for further successful implementation of the strategy to develop a smart, sustainable, and inclusive society of the 21st century.

Eugenia Smyrnova-Trybulska